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Bangalore Mirror ON SATURDAY

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10 percolation pits dug in Ganesha Park's playground have made it out of bounds for children; organisation says areas being designated undeveloped parks has caused confusion

ALL PITS & NO PLAY

Number of pits based on total run-off and catchment area: BBMP

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Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike's (BBMP) idea to dig percolation pits for rainwater harvesting is rendering playgrounds in the city useless.

BBMP's Horticulture Department has dug 10 such pits in Ganesha Park with an attached playground in Yelahanka nearly two months ago. Since then, the playground has been abandoned.

"The play park was always buzzing with children and players who would come for various sports such as cricket, basketball,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12 »

KAUSHIK JN

> Ten RWH pits have been dug and spaced nearly 5 metres apart. The entire area is filled with these pits, making it unusable for children
> — Yelahanka New Town resident

MAGIC IN THE SKY

Solar flares, eclipses, supermoons and more — what's in store for sky-gazers in 2025

PAGE 2

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KIIT (Deemed to be University) has only one permanent campus in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. It has no other campus / off campus anywhere else in the country and globe.

THINGS TO DO

01 Ragas across genres

The Indian Music Experience (IME) presents Drawing Parallels: Adapting and Adopting Ragas Across Karnatik and Hindustani Music; a masterclass with Dr Sriram Parasuram. Dr Sriram Parasuram is a distinguished musician and has come from a family deeply rooted in musical heritage. **Where: The Indian Music Experience Museum, JP Nagar; When: January 5, 11 am to 1 pm**

02 Special talents

Ummeed is dedicated to showcasing the remarkable talents of children with special needs. Ummeed will witness performances by 15 children, including singers, musicians and dancers. A select group of parents will share their personal journeys on how they discovered their child's talent. **Where: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Race Course Road; When: January 4, 5 pm**

03 Chitra Santhe

Karnataka Chitrakala Parishath in association with the government of Karnataka is organising the 22nd edition of Chitra Santhe. **Where: Chitrakala Parishath; When: January 5, 10.30 am onwards**

04 Veena mesmer

Karnataka State Department of Horticulture is organising a carnatic session with Vid D Balakrishna, prominent Carnatic musician who plays Veena in the Mysore tradition. **Where: Cubbon Park Bandstand; When: January 5, 8 am**

05 Book reading

Join award-winning author Shobha Tharoor Srinivasan for an engaging reading of her book, Sandalwood's Story. Through vibrant illustrations and endearing characters, this tale introduces children to India's flora and the cultural significance of trees, while inspiring self-confidence and humanity. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: January 4, 11 am to 12 pm**

Grab binocs to behold celestial marvels of 2025

This year will witness series of celestial activities from heightened solar activity, 4 eclipses, 3 supermoons, to disappearance of Saturn's rings

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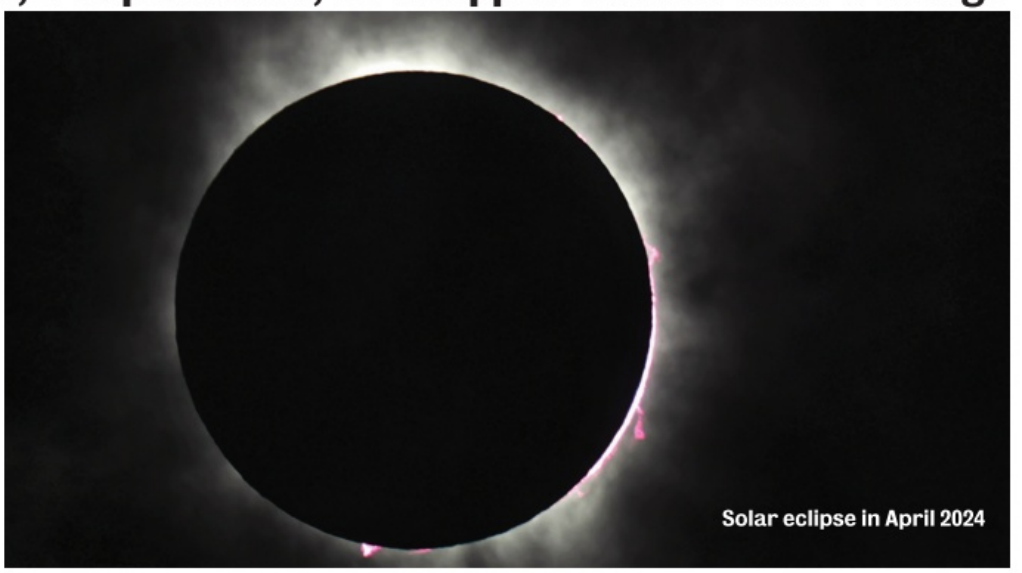


Solar eclipse in April 2024

The year 2025 promises to be a celestial treat, offering a spectacular display of astronomical wonders. According to experts, this year will witness heightened solar activity, four eclipses, three supermoons, and the temporary disappearance of Saturn's rings until November. These events are expected to captivate stargazers and science enthusiasts worldwide.

Solar flares

Solar flares, which follow an 11-year cycle, are set to peak significantly in 2025. These powerful bursts of energy began intensifying last year and are predicted to be most prominent in the early months of the year. The sun will emit high-energy particles and light, creating extraordinary solar phenomena that will light up the skies like never before.

Planetary movements

In addition to the solar flares, planetary movements will offer breathtaking sights. Mars will be particularly vivid in January, Saturn will dominate in September, and Jupiter will shine brightly in December. A rare alignment of Mercury, Venus, Saturn, Jupiter, and Mars will occur towards the end of February, creating a stunning sequence of planets visible from west to east.

Eclipses

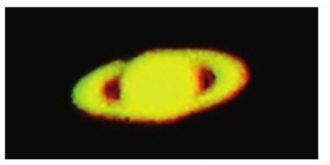
The year will also bring four eclipses, though only one will be visible in India. A lunar eclipse will occur on March 13-14, followed by a partial solar eclipse on March 29. Another lunar eclipse is set for September 7-8, which will be visible in India, while a partial solar eclipse will follow on September 21. These eclipses will undoubtedly be among the most anticipated celestial events of the year.

Supermoons

Adding to the list of wonders, 2025 will feature three supermoons, occurring on October 7, November 5, and December 4. These full moons will appear larger and brighter than usual, creating a stunning visual spectacle. In contrast, three micromoons, appearing smaller due to their distance from Earth, will occur on March 14, April 13, and May 12, offering a unique contrast to the supermoon displays.

Disappearance of Saturn's rings

One of the rarest events of the year will be the temporary disappearance of Saturn's rings. From March to November, the planet's iconic rings will not be visible through telescopes due to their alignment with Earth. This phenomenon, occurring for only the second time in 29 years, is caused by the alignment of Saturn's ring plane with Earth's orbital plane. Astrophysicists said that with such a lineup of rare and extraordinary events, 2025 is shaping up to be a remarkable year for astronomy. Enthusiasts and casual observers alike will have plenty of opportunities to marvel at the universe's grandeur and the beauty of celestial phenomena of the greater space.



From March to November, Saturn planet's iconic rings will not be visible through telescopes due to their alignment with Earth

New facilities launched at NIMHANS Golden Jubilee celebrations

The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, addressed the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) in the presence of JP Nadda, Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister of Karnataka, on Friday. Addressing the gathering, the President said, "This occasion is a moment of celebration for NIMHANS and the entire country. The dedication displayed by faculty members, students, and the administration of NIMHANS to the noble cause of mental health has helped NIMHANS play an exemplary role in our society. The history of NIMHANS goes back to the nineteenth century and thus the evolution of the institute affects the evolution of mental healthcare in India."

She also highlighted that the Tele-MANAS platform, with its 53 centres across the country, has served nearly 70 lakh people in their chosen languages during the last two years.

As part of the celebrations, various new facilities were inaugurated at NIMHANS' mission of delivering cutting-edge care in mental health and neurosciences. These are the Psychiatry Speciality Block, Central Laboratory Complex, Bhima Hostel, Next Generation 3T MRI Scanner and Advanced DSA System.

The Central Laboratory Complex integrates five essential laboratory services—neuropathology, neurochemistry, clinical pathology & hematology, neuromicrobiology, and neurovirology—to deliver precision-driven diagnostics and groundbreaking research for complex neurological conditions. The Bhima Hostel offers a modern, well-equipped living environment for students, catering to the institute's growing academic community. Additionally, the state-of-the-art 3T MRI scanner ensures faster and higher-quality imaging through advanced technologies like AI-based reconstruction platforms. The newly installed biplane Digital Subtraction Angiography (DSA) system enhances the diagnosis and treatment of brain disorders with exceptional visualisation capabilities, supporting accurate clinical interventions.

President of India at Golden Jubilee Celebrations of NIMHANS Bengaluru, in presence of Union Health Minister JP Nadda, and Chief Minister Siddaramaiah

Nadda congratulated all the students and faculty members for elevating NIMHANS into one of the premier institutes in India. "I convey my gratitude to the faculty members, students, and all the relevant stakeholders who have contributed to the growth of NIMHANS from a mental health institute to an Institute of National Importance," he stated.

He added, "Patient footfall in NIMHANS has grown more than fivefold, from under 10 lakhs in the 1970s to over 50 lakhs in the last decade. The scale at which NIMHANS treats its immense footfall of patients makes them a leader in quality healthcare in India." He also congratulated NIMHANS for being the first NABH accredited hospital among all the Institutes of National Importance and for being ranked among the top 200 hospitals in the world. Siddaramaiah said, "For the past 5 decades, NIMHANS has emerged as a symbol of excellence and hope, making remarkable contributions to mental health and neurosciences in India and beyond. In its decade-long journey as an Institute of National Importance, NIMHANS has become a global leader in clinical care, research, and education, shaping mental health policies and inspiring practices worldwide."

— BMB

Woman's ordeal throws light on gaps in distress response systems

Network issues hinder calls and many in city unaware of use of apps, emergency helpline numbers

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A 30-year-old woman had a harrowing experience while travelling alone in an autorickshaw booked via the Namma Yatri app on Thursday night. The driver, reportedly in an inebriated state, ignored her repeated requests to follow the correct route and instead drove in erratic directions.

The woman, an employee of a private firm, had booked the autorickshaw from Horamavu to Thanisandra at around 8.50 pm after visiting her relatives. Trouble began when the driver took a flyover instead of the right route. Despite her attempts to alert him, the driver continued behaving strangely.

Azhar Khan, the woman's husband, told BM, "My wife told me how the driver ignored her pleas and kept ensuring there were no vehicles nearbt, all the while looking for something under his seat."

The woman messaged Azhar about the situation and seizing an opportunity as the vehicle slowed down near Veeranapalya on Hebbal Road to negotiate a speed bump, she jumped out. The victim said the driver asked her to return to the vehicle, assuring her he would drop her off, but she refused. She paid the fare,

Special safety measures for women during New Year's eve in Bengaluru

"We are employing every possible method, from distributing pamphlets to using social media and public awareness campaigns, to inform women about these safety apps

walked some distance, and eventually took another auto to reach home safely. Azhar contacted 112 for police assistance but faced delays due to jurisdictional confusion, being redirected from Sampigehalli to Govindapura and finally to Amruthahalli Police Station, a process that took nearly two hours.

He also filed a complaint through the City Police's social media platform and contacted Namma Yatri's customer care, but received no concrete response. On Friday, a Non-Cognizable Report (NCR) was registered at Amruthahalli Police Station, and efforts are underway to trace the autorickshaw driver.

Distress app usage remains low

This incident has raised questions about the efficacy of distress response systems in the city. Many women remain unaware of resources such as the Suraksha app or helpline numbers provided by the police for emergency assistance.

Azhar told BM that even when his wife was trying to call him and her brother, due to network issues, the calls failed to connect. He added had she attempted to reach 112 or sought assistance through any safety apps too, the lack of network coverage in the area would have rendered them ineffective.

As of January 2025, specific usage statistics for safety applications like the Suraksha app and the Karnataka State Police (KSP) app in Bengaluru are limited. However, available data indicates that adoption rates remain relatively low. According to recent data, fewer than 25% of distress app downloads translate into active usage.

Awareness & action

Ensuring the safety of women also requires increased patrolling, improved lighting, and stricter enforcement against offenders, citizens say. The police have been working to create awareness about emergency mechanisms through campaigns and videos. "We are employing every possible method, from distributing pamphlets to using social media and public awareness campaigns, to inform women about these safety apps. Unfortunately, in some cases, they don't use them, though it could be crucial in time of trouble," said Commissioner of Police, B Dayananda.

'Only parents have right to appeal orders on maintenance'

The High Court has ruled that only parents or senior citizens possess the exclusive right to appeal before the Deputy Commissioner against orders issued by the Assistant Commissioner under the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, differing from other High Courts' interpretations.

The Act's Section 23 allows senior citizens or parents to approach the Assistant Commissioner to void property transfers if transferees fail to provide basic amenities as agreed. Section 16 grants senior citizens and parents the right to appeal before the Deputy Commissioner if dissatisfied with the Assistant Commissioner's order.

"The language of Section 16 of the Act is plain, clear, and unambiguous. This provision specifically and unequivocally grants the right of appeal exclusively to senior citizens. Extending this right to any other person, including the transferee [children or third parties], is not permissible," stated a Division Bench comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice KV Aravind. The Bench clarified that extending appeal rights to transferees would constitute rewriting the provision, which exceeds the courts' jurisdiction.

"When the text of Section 16 of the Act is read and understood in light of the object and reasons behind the legislation, it becomes abundantly clear that Parliament intended to provide the remedy of appeal under Section 16 solely to senior citizens or parents. Any alternative interpretation would lead to an absurd outcome..." the Bench noted. The court indicated that aggrieved children or transferees could seek remedy by approaching the High Court under Article 226 of the Constitution against Assistant Commissioner orders. Addressing other High Courts' reasoning about the absence of negative provisions, the Bench cited Supreme Court precedent stating appeal rights cannot be assumed through logical analysis when not explicitly created in the statute. **BMB**

No double-side parking folks, cops will be watching

Dedicated traffic inspector will be assigned to 3 roads; they will patrol it through the day, impose strict penalties

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In a bid to address one of the issues that is causing traffic congestion in the city, traffic officials have launched a targeted initiative to tackle double-side parking. Under this new strategy, a dedicated traffic inspector will oversee three specific roads, ensuring smoother traffic flow and pedestrian safety.

After the TomTom Traffic Index 2023 labelled Bengaluru as Asia's most congested city, there has been more focus on this vexing issue. Deputy Commissioner of Police (Traffic South) Shiva Prakash Devaraju explained that "double-side parking, breakdowns of vehicle and BMTC buses, waterlogging, and ongoing BMRCL constructions are the top four reasons for traffic congestion".

A persistent menace

Double-side parking, where vehicles occupy both sides of narrow streets, drastically reduces available road space, creating bottlenecks and paralysing traffic during peak hours. This issue is particularly pronounced in densely populated areas like Malleswaram and Rajajinagar, where the demand for parking far exceeds supply. Roads intended for two-lane traffic are often reduced to a single, constricted lane, resulting in severe gridlock and driver frustration.

Prof MN Sreehari, advisor to the state government for traffic, transportation and infrastructure, emphasised the challenges posed by Bengaluru's narrow roads, stating, "If you allow parking on the roads, a significant portion of the width is lost. People often park haphazardly, exacerbating the problem. The government should act swiftly to implement solutions, such as underground parking systems beneath parks, which would provide ample parking space without disturbing greenery or playgrounds."

Sreehari had also suggested that the construction of two-to three-level underground parking lots under parks would alleviate traffic woes. "This approach can improve traffic flow, ensure vehicle safety, and generate revenue through parking fees," he added. "Without timely action, traffic issues will only worsen."

New strategy

The new initiative assigns each traffic inspector with the responsibility for three key roads in their jurisdiction. The selection of roads is based on traffic density, frequent parking violations, and public complaints. Inspectors will patrol their assigned roads throughout the day, issuing fines of Rs 1,000 and arranging wheel locks for severe infractions.

The decision to impose fines is expected to deter those who contribute to the congestion by flouting parking regulations.

The traffic officials believe that enforcing the rule will not only reduce congestion but also enhance the safety of pedestrians who often have to navigate the already narrow roads. "This initiative is designed to ensure stricter enforcement of parking rules. We will be starting it off soon," said Devaraju.

Width issue

While newer roads being constructed have wider dimensions, experts stress the need for sustainable parking solutions and disciplined driving behaviour.

A citizen said enforcement of the new rule will be key. "Police should enforce the traffic rules strictly, not only with regard to parking of vehicles but also for other violations like talking on the mobile while riding or driving, ignoring traffic lights at signals, overtaking from the left side and others. I omitted the helmet rule because it is in the interest of the riders so they must do it."

Metro plan on Magadi Road set to transform real estate landscape

The proposed Corridor-2 of Bengaluru Metro, connecting Hosahalli to Kadabagere along Magadi Road, is expected to act as a catalyst for property development in the region. Spanning 12.50 kilometres and featuring nine strategically located stations, this metro corridor promises to enhance connectivity and spur real estate growth.

Enhanced connectivity driving growth

This metro route has been meticulously planned to link key residential and commercial areas. Stations at Hosahalli, Vinayak Nagar, Sumanahalli Cross, Sunkadakatte, Herohalli, and Byadarahalli ensure the integration of these neighbourhoods into the city's rapidly expanding metro network. By bridging the gap between Magadi Road and Kadabagere, the metro will ease traffic congestion and reduce travel times, making the area more accessible to businesses, investors, and residents.

Real estate experts predict the metro's presence will significantly increase demand for residential and commercial spaces in these areas. Proximity to metro stations is critical for homebuyers and businesses alike, as it enhances convenience and accessibility. "The metro corridor is expected to attract the attention of property developers who see the potential for transforming underdeveloped areas into thriving urban centres. The upcoming metro on Magadi Road is a game-changer. Areas like Sunkadakatte and Herohalli, which were once considered peripheral, will now become prime investment destinations. Improved infrastructure along the route, coupled with better connectivity, will likely lead to a surge in housing projects, commercial complexes, and mixed-use developments. Additionally, small and medium enterprises will benefit from the enhanced transport network, enabling them to tap into a larger talent pool and customer base," said Nandu Reddy, a property developer.

Metro boosts demand for residential, commercial spaces

Affordability and livability

Magadi Road has traditionally been a hub for affordable housing, attracting middle-income families seeking budget-friendly options. The metro project will elevate the livability quotient of these neighbourhoods, making them attractive not just for residents but also for professionals working in other parts of Bengaluru. "With the metro, families can enjoy the dual benefits of affordable housing and seamless connectivity to the city centre. It's an ideal scenario for those looking to balance cost and convenience," said Raje Gowda, a property developer.

Transforming the landscape

As the Hosahalli-Kadabagere metro corridor inches closer to realisation, the surrounding areas are poised for transformation. The project is expected to create new economic opportunities, attract investments, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents. "Magadi Road is on the brink of a metamorphosis. The metro will not only improve connectivity but also redefine the region as a hub for growth and innovation. This transformative project underscores Bengaluru's vision of becoming a city where infrastructure drives progress, and Magadi Road is set to be at the forefront of this evolution," added Gowda.

–Prakash VL

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Land deals surge 65%, B'luru captures 22% of market

According to the latest report, there is a 65% year-on-year surge in land deal volume across the country, reaching approximately 1,700 acres. This growth has been dominated by six major cities, including Bengaluru, alongside Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Pune, between January and September 2024. During this period, over 100 land deals were closed, up from just over 60 in the same period last year.

Bengaluru played a prominent role, capturing around 22% of the total land deals in India, second only to Delhi-NCR, which led with a 32% share. Bengaluru, along with Mumbai and Chennai, contributed to a combined 75% share of land deal volumes, showcasing the city's importance in India's real estate landscape. In Delhi-NCR, Gurgaon alone accounted for 65% of the region's land deals, followed by Noida/Greater Noida at 20%.

The report also provides insight into asset-wise land deals. Residential assets led the way, accounting for 61% of deal volume, spanning over 870 acres—a 50% increase compared to the first nine months of 2023. Industrial & Logistics (I&L) followed with 13% of the total deals, covering 525 acres, while Data Centers emerged as a growing asset class, making up 6% of the deal volume across more than 140 acres. The Office segment saw growth as well, contributing 8% of the total transactions, a notable increase from last year. Meanwhile, Retail and Hospital assets accounted for 2% and 5% of the deals, respectively, signalling diversification in the types of assets investors are focusing on.

Commenting on the findings, Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO of India, South-East Asia, Middle East & Africa, CBRE, said, "The increased land deal activity across various asset classes demonstrates the strong investor confidence and evolving dynamics of the Indian real estate market. The growth in segments like Residential and the rise of emerging categories like Data Centers show that investors see significant long-term potential in India's real estate sector."

Gaurav Kumar, Managing Director, Capital Markets and Land, CBRE India, added, "The sharp rise in land deals this year reflects the strong confidence both domestic and international investors have in India's real estate potential. With favourable economic conditions and robust demand, we expect this momentum to continue, driven by strategic investments that highlight the market's stability and long-term growth opportunities."

Kanakapura Road: Rising residential gem in Bengaluru

Kanakapura Road, once an underdeveloped stretch, has transformed into one of Bengaluru's most sought-after residential hubs. Known for its lush greenery, excellent connectivity, and a growing array of amenities, the area has become an ideal location for families and professionals looking for a balanced lifestyle.

Good connectivity

One of the primary factors driving interest in Kanakapura Road is its good connectivity. The extension of the Namma Metro Green Line to Anjanapura and plans to extend further have made commuting to major parts of Bengaluru seamless. Additionally, the NICE Road and Outer Ring Road provide easy access to IT hubs like Electronic City, Bannerghatta Road, and Whitefield. The Bengaluru-Mysuru Infrastructure Corridor and the upcoming Peripheral Ring Road are expected to further enhance connectivity. Rahul Jain, a software professional who recently purchased a plot here, said, "I used to spend hours commuting from my previous residence to work. With the metro extension, I can now reach my office in Electronic City in just 30 minutes. This connectivity was a game-changer for me.

Kanakapura Road is now home to a wide range of amenities that cater to modern lifestyles. Renowned educational institutions are located in the vicinity, making it a preferred choice for families with school-going children. Healthcare facilities ensure residents have access to top-notch medical care."

For shopping and entertainment, areas like Jayanagar and JP Nagar are a short drive away, while upcoming malls like the Mantri Arena Mall will add to the options. Local markets, restaurants, and cafes have also sprouted, adding to the vibrant social life. Vidya Rao, a homemaker who moved to the area with her family last year, added, "When we decided to move, we wanted a place that offered good schools and hospitals nearby. Kanakapura Road ticked all the boxes for us. The peaceful surroundings and availability of parks were an added bonus. Unlike the bustling and crowded localities in central Bengaluru, Kanakapura Road offers a calm and serene environment. Surrounded by greenery and scenic spots like the Turahalli Forest and Art of Living International Centre, residents enjoy a refreshing escape from the city's chaos. Moreover, the area has seen a surge in well-planned residential projects by reputed builders, offering gated communities with state-of-the-art amenities such as swimming pools, gyms, and landscaped gardens. With options ranging from affordable housing to luxury villas, there is something for everyone."

Ajay Menon, an architect who chose to settle here, added, "The balance between nature and modernity is what drew me to Kanakapura Road. I can enjoy the peacefulness of my surroundings while living in a home that has all the modern facilities I need. The future of Kanakapura Road looks promising, with ongoing infrastructure projects and a steady influx of investments. The proposed Harohalli and Kanakapura bypasses will ease traffic congestion and provide smoother connectivity to industrial areas, boosting the region's economic potential."

Real estate experts believe that property prices in the area will continue to appreciate, making it an excellent investment opportunity. According to Anjan Kumar, a local real estate agent, "With the metro line operational and more developments in the pipeline, Kanakapura Road has become a hotspot for real estate. Buyers are not just looking at it as a place to live but also as a long-term investment. With its mix of modern infrastructure, natural beauty, and unmatched connectivity, Kanakapura Road has become a preferred destination for homebuyers. Whether it's young professionals, growing families, or retirees looking for tranquility, the area offers something for everyone. Overall, Kanakapura Road has grown along with us. It feels like the perfect place to put down roots and build a future. I can't imagine living anywhere else. Kanakapura Road isn't just another residential locality—it's a thriving community that blends the best of both worlds. For those seeking a balanced lifestyle, this is where the journey to a better life begins."

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Ejipura flyover finally set to cross finish line

Work on much-delayed Ejipura Flyover gains momentum, with contractors inviting RWAs to the site to update on progress; completion is targeted for year-end

Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

The construction of the much-delayed Ejipura Flyover is set to be completed by the end of this year. The contractor has taken measures to expedite the ongoing construction work by deploying extra men and machinery. The residents of Ejipura, ST Bed Area and Koramangala are expected to celebrate New Year under the newly constructed Ejipura Flyover.

The contractor of the Ejipura Flyover had invited residents' welfare associations (RWAs) to the construction site to update the progress of the construction work. "There are 130 segments ready in the casting yard which can complete the construction of 11 spans. 53 spans are to be completed out of the total 64 spans. I am happy with the preparedness to accelerate the construction work to cover up the lost time and achieve completion. We have been in touch with the BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) right from the floating of the tender to date. The BBMP engineers are very transparent and committed. The contractor should utilise project management skills to complete the project on time," said the president of Koramangala 4th Block Residents' Welfare Association R Raghu Rajagopal.

Koramangala ST Bed Layout Residents' Welfare Association president M Rajendra Babu appreciated Minister for Transport and BTM Layout MLA Ramalinga Reddy, along with BBMP authorities, for their efforts to recommence the construction of the Ejipura Flyover. He noted that the contractor arranged a meeting with the RWAs to explain the measures being taken to expedite the project's completion. "We are happy with the progress of the construction work. We expect the construction work to be completed by the end of this year. I urge the contractor to complete the work without any hurdles," said Rajendra Babu.

Members of Residents' Welfare Associations at Ejipura Flyover construction site

Emphasising the need to sustain the current progress of the construction work, Nitin Seshadri, former president of Koramangala 3rd Block Residents' Welfare Association, said the BBMP has to take measures to expedite the completion of the construction work. "I have noticed a lot of activity on the construction site for the last two to three weeks. There is a lot to be done to facilitate no hurdles to complete the construction of the flyover. The BBMP authorities have to complete land acquisition on time. There should not be any blame game between the BBMP authorities and the contractor. If the construction work continues at the same speed that has been happening in the last three weeks, I expect the flyover to be ready for the public in 12 to 14 months," said Nitin Seshadri.

> **"We are monitoring construction of flyover daily. We are taking measures to ensure completion on time** – BBMP Chief Engineer

Speaking with Bangalore Mirror, V Raghunatha Naidu, contractor, said the construction work is progressing. "We found two spans manufactured by the previous contractor developed cracks. It took three months to replace those spans. I am confident of completing the ongoing construction work by the end of this year," he said.

Meanwhile, BBMP Chief Engineer (Projects) Lokesh said the construction work is in progress. "We are monitoring the construction of the flyover daily. We are taking measures to ensure completion of the ongoing work on time," the Chief Engineer said.

The 2.5-km flyover has been under construction since 2017 and the work slowed down in 2019 when the then-contractor went bankrupt. The cost of the flyover is estimated to be 204 crore and the construction was supposed to be completed by 2019. The BBMP is yet to clear the hurdles in land acquisition. The BBMP assured to complete the flyover by March 2024 but now it is extended by more than a year.

Dust, delays, and disruptions: White-topping works cause havoc

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A few major roads in Bengaluru, which witness thousands of vehicles daily, have been dug up for white-topping work under the BBMP's (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) "Brand Bengaluru" initiative aimed at facilitating smoother traffic flow. However, loose soil left behind has not only disrupted vehicular movement but also impacted traders and pedestrians, with motorists struggling due to the dust.

Under this project, the BBMP has taken up white-topping and pedestrian pathway development in various parts of the city. Roads have been excavated, and soil has been left scattered, leading to inconvenience for commuters, pedestrians, and local businesses. Despite months of work, the incomplete state of the project has prompted residents to demand its swift completion. One such affected area is Chamarajpet's Pampa Mahakavi Road, from Minto Hospital Junction to 5th Main Road. Although the project began four months ago, the installation of Cauvery water pipelines, sanitary pipes, and various cables is still incomplete. Officials estimate that the actual white-topping and pedestrian pathway work could take another two months to start. "Even after four months of road excavation, pipeline installation work remains unfinished. With sidewalks dug up, pedestrians are forced to navigate through busy streets, which is extremely hazardous," said Ravi, a college student.

The disruptions extend to institutions such as the Kannada Sahitya Parishat, VV Puram Police Station, Karnataka Samskrita University, Government Colleges, Karnataka State Cooperative Consumers' Federation, and several banks. Thousands of visitors to these establishments face daily struggles, including parking issues and health problems caused by the dust. Children attending nearby events and classes are also exposed to respiratory risks. When contacted, a BBMP official said, "The project faced initial technical challenges, which have now been resolved. We aim to complete the work within 45 days."

Other affected areas

White-topping and pipeline work has also disrupted Main Guard Road. Even well-paved roads have been dug up, leaving mounds of soil behind. Several internal roads across Chamarajpet are similarly affected, with ongoing work progressing at a snail's pace.

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Sidewalk blocked

Gangondanahalli

The sidewalk at 437 Gangondanahalli, Mysore Road, is completely blocked by an eatery, leaving no space for pedestrians to walk.

Neglected path

Rachenahalli

The road behind Rachenahalli Lake, along Srirampura Road, has remained in a dilapidated condition for the past three months.

Unfixed stretch

JP Nagar

The damaged road stretch at JP Nagar 8th Phase, Pavamana Nagar, has remained unfixed for the past year.

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

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STORYBEHINDTHEPHOTO

SOUR TREAT

Spotted on the Mysore-Bangalore highway. The bilimbi tree sprouts its flowers and fruits from the trunk as well as branches. Mothers pluck the fruit to make a chutney but children often raid the fridge and finish off the fruit despite the tongue-biting sourness that has to be endured

The picture was clicked by reader **T Prakash**

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BBMP starts making space for street vendors

Officials asked to identify roads in Western Zone where street vending can be allowed as per norms

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BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Giri Nath has directed officials to identify roads in Bengaluru's western zone where street vending can be permitted in accordance with established guidelines. During the "Chief Commissioner's Walk Towards the Zone" programme held in the western zone on Friday, Nath said that street vendors, in particular, requested that they not be disturbed until vending zones are officially identified. Responding to their concerns, the Chief Commissioner noted that approximately 7,000 street vendors have already been identified in the western zone. The BBMP is currently working on designating vending zones, and until then, officials have been instructed to identify streets where vendors can temporarily operate.

Mark spaces and allow vendors to operate

Officials were tasked with identifying specific streets where street vendors can conduct their business without disrupting pedestrian movement.

The pavements will be marked to allocate vending spaces, ensuring smooth passage for pedestrians while providing vendors with designated areas to operate.

Remove permanent encroachments

The Chief Commissioner stressed the immediate removal of permanent structures set up on footpaths for conducting business. He said that pedestrian pathways must remain accessible and free from encroachments. Additionally, shopkeepers and businesses encroaching upon footpaths in front of their establishments were directed to vacate these areas to ensure pedestrian convenience.

Proposal for electric crematorium

Addressing a request regarding the construction of an electric crematorium near the TR Mill burial ground in Chamarajpet, which spans three acres, the Chief Commissioner instructed officials to submit a proposal for the facility. The crematorium, once built, is expected to greatly benefit the local community. During the program, over 90 grievances were submitted by citizens in the western zone. The Chief Commissioner instructed officials to resolve all complaints on priority basis.

Till the designated vending zones are ready, officials have been asked to find alternate spaces for vendors

DID YOU KNOW?

The Dutch are known worldwide for their wooden shoes, but the recent rare discovery of a 500-year-old one in the city of Alkmaar has shown just how widespread their use once was.
"It was found in a cesspit in an urban surrounding. So this is very special, because with wooden shoes you always think of farmers using wooden shoes during their work," archaeologist Silke Lange told Reuters.
"But actually this was found in an urban context. They were using this kind of footwear for daily use."
The wooden shoe was found in a cesspit that was discovered last month during construction of an underground waste container in Alkmaar, around 30 km (18.6 miles) northwest of Amsterdam.
The cesspit was used as a toilet and for waste disposal from around 1450 to 1558, archaeologists said.
The clog, a European size 36 (UK size 3.5), is estimated to have been made at the end of the 15th or early in the 16th century. It is the first ever found in the Netherlands made of birch wood, and one of only 44 wooden shoes ever found during excavations in the Netherlands and Belgium. — Reuters

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Harbhajan Singh's daughter falsely identified as Virat Kohli's child

| PTInews.com

A picture of Indian cricketer Virat Kohli with a girl child on his lap was recently shared on social media, with users claiming that he was with his daughter in the picture. However, the PTI Fact Check Desk's investigation found that the girl child was not Virat Kohli's daughter, but that of former cricketer Harbhajan Singh. The photo was shared on social media with a false claim.

Claim: A Facebook user named 'Crico' shared a photo on December 25 claiming that it showed Virat Kohli with his daughter. Here is the link and archive link and below is a screenshot of the same.

Investigation

The Desk ran the photo through Google Lens and found that another user had shared the same photo with a similar caption. Here is the link and archive link to the post. On further scanning the search results, we came across a news report published by News 18 in May 2017, whose headline read: "Virat Kohli is in Awe of Harbhajan Singh's Daughter". It carried an Instagram post by Kohli, shared on May 2, 2017.

Here is the link to the report. The caption of the post read: "Baby hinaya looking for something in my beard. And i am surprised how can someone be so beautiful and cuteee. What a blessing to @harbhajan3 @geetabasra . God bless you all" Here is the link to the post and below is a screenshot of the same. We then looked for pictures of Virat and Anuskha's daughter Vamika to substantiate the investigation and found an article by News 18, whose headline read: "Twitter Reaction: First picture of Anushka Sharma-Virat Kohli's daughter Vamika surfaced, people are praising her cuteness"

Twitter Reaction: First picture of Anushka Sharma-Virat Kohli's daughter Vamika surfaced, people are praising her cuteness

Here is the link to the article and below is the screenshot of the same. Subsequently, the Desk concluded that the girl child with Virat Kohli in the viral photo was Harbhajan Singh's daughter.

CLAIM: Photo of Virat Kohli with his daughter.

FACT: The photo dates back to 2017 and shows Virat Kohli with Harbhajan Singh's daughter.

CONCLUSION: A photo was recently shared on social media with users claiming that it showed Virat Kohli with his daughter Vamika. In its investigation, the Desk found that the child in the photo was Harbhajan Singh's daughter and the photograph dated back to 2017.

The story was originally published by PTInews.com (Scan QR Code for Link) and republished by Bangalore Mirror as part of the Shakti Collective.

22 years without compensation for land: SC slams state govt

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The Supreme Court declared on Thursday that property rights are fundamental human rights in a welfare State and are constitutionally protected under Article 300-A. The Court emphasised that individuals must receive prompt compensation when dispossessed of their property.

Justices BR Gavai and KV Vishwanathan reprimanded Karnataka government officials for their negligent approach, which caused Bernard Francis Joseph Vaz and others to wait 22 years without compensation for land acquired for the Bengaluru-Mysuru infrastructure corridor project. Utilising its extraordinary authority under Article 142 of the Constitution to ensure complete justice, the Court ordered that the market value of the disputed land be determined as of April 22, 2019. The Court instructed the Special Land Acquisition Officer to issue a new award within two months.

It stated that calculating compensation at 2003 market values would undermine justice and render Article

300-A meaningless. The Court observed that Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board took possession of the appellants' land on November 22, 2005, transferring it to Nandi Infrastructure Corridor Enterprise and Nandi Economic Corridor Enterprises Ltd, without immediate compensation. It stressed that Article 300-A protects citizens from property deprivation except through legal means, noting that the appellants had been denied their rightful compensation for nearly 22 years.

The Court acknowledged that monetary value changes with time, affected by investment potential and inflation, and highlighted that compensation amounts from 2003 would have different purchasing power in 2025. It emphasised the necessity for swift determination and disbursement of compensation in land acquisition cases. The appeal was granted, overturning the Karnataka High Court's division bench ruling of November 22, 2022, which had denied the appellants' request for current market value compensation.

The Court found that state authorities' inaction from 2003 to 2019 justified the SLAO's (special land acquisition officer) decision to adjust the market value determination date, despite lacking formal authority for such adjustment. The Court determined that the High Court's division bench had rejected the appellants' case on overly technical grounds.

Migration fuels school dropout crisis in K'taka

B'luru South leads with 2,028 school dropouts, followed by B'luru North with 1,824; across state, 9,326 children have dropped out in 2024-25 academic year

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PIC FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY

Urban areas in the state have recorded a higher number of school dropouts

Bengaluru, especially Bengaluru South, is renowned as a hub for premier educational institutions. However, it is unfortunate that Bengaluru South also leads the state in an area of concern: the highest number of school dropouts. During the current academic year of 2024-25, as many as 9,326 children have dropped out of schools across Karnataka. Despite efforts by the Education Department to re-enrol these students, the results have been less than satisfactory. Notably, urban areas in the state have recorded a higher number of school dropouts.

Leading the charts, Bengaluru South has seen 2,028 children have left school, while Bengaluru North reported 1,824 dropouts. In Koppal district, 1,181 children have been deprived of education. Efforts are underway to re-enrol 5,728 of these children in nearby schools, though the process remains incomplete.

Why are children dropping out of school?

An official said, "A survey conducted by the Education Department highlights various reasons for the dropout rates. One primary cause is parents migrating to other states for work. Many families move to urban areas for employment opportunities, but if they lose their jobs or face other challenges, they are forced to migrate again, taking their children with them. Health issues among children have also contributed to the dropout rates. The survey mentioned other reasons as well, including socio-economic challenges and lack of access to resources."

Dropout data	
Bengaluru South	2,028
Bengaluru North	1,824
Koppal	1,181
Yadgir	422
Kalaburagi	374
Chitradurga	323

> **"Many families move to urban areas for employment opportunities, but if they lose their jobs they are forced to migrate again, taking their children with them** –Official

Enrolment and dropout Statistics for 2023-24

This year, the state recorded 1,04,69,944 registered students. In Bengaluru South 2, 12,00,292 students were enrolled, but 2,028 dropped out, with efforts to bring 1,978 of them back to school underway. Bengaluru North saw 7,19,176 enrollments, with 1,824 dropouts, of which 1,049 are being re-enrolled. In Koppal, 2,90,220 students were registered, but 1,181 dropped out, and efforts to bring back 592 students are in progress. Of the total dropouts, the re-enrollment process for 5,728 children in nearby schools is ongoing. The Education Department and district officials are closely monitoring this situation. Other districts with significant dropout numbers include Chikkamagaluru (196), Dharwad (170), Gadag (150), Haveri (122), Shivamogga (112).

Focus on re-enrolment

Minister for School Education and Literacy, S Madhu Bangarappa said, "The district-level officials are taking steps to ensure that all children return to school. The Education Department, in coordination with local authorities, is working to address the dropout rates and ensure that every child has access to education."

Clean, green flower show planned

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With the upcoming Republic Day flower show, Lalbagh Botanical Garden authorities along with various experts are preparing to come out with a plastic-free and eco-friendly flower show. A meeting was held where multiple suggestions were given by experts on waste management.

M Jagadeesh, Joint Director, horticulture (Lalbagh) said, "This year on Republic Day, the flower show event, the theme would be on Maharishi Valmiki, revered as the "Adi Kavi" (first poet) of Sanskrit literature. The life story of Valmiki would be depicted. Around 25 lakh flowers will be used at the event. We are taking suggestions from experts on how to ensure that the event is plastic-free."

Odette Katrak from Beautiful Bharat who was part of the discussion said, "It is great to see improvement year after year, as I have been involved since 2016 to make it a litter-free, plastic-free event. Since COVID, we have also pulled in being spit-free as an aim - especially with Dr Yelappa Reddy sharing during today's planning meeting that multidrug-resistant (MDR) TB strains and newer Covid strains are prevalent in Bangalore and spread by spitting in the open, and this must get attention in addition to other measures for clean premises. So our BBMP (Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike) marshalls will be tasked to fine anyone spitting besides litter, using banned plastic."

Katrak further added, "During the planning meeting, I have stressed the importance of keeping banned items off the premises, especially NWPP (non-woven polypropylene) bags, by preventing entry at the 4 gates itself with stringent gate checks. We hope with support from marshalls to make this possible."

All vendors must adhere to the terms outlined in the Vendor Agreement, which covers behaviour, compliance with the plastic ban, waste management requirements, and safety standards. They will also be issued photo ID cards. The refundable deposit of Rs 5000, as announced last year, will be applicable.

Support of police, home guards and BBMP marshalls will be taken to handle vendors violating any of the terms of the agreement. They will be given a warning and on a second repeat offence, will be asked to vacate their stall.

The focus will be to make this an eco-friendly flower show, with nil use of banned items, reducing litter with adequate bins and ensuring waste is segregated and recycled with support from the Saahas team. Waste will also be reduced with the use of reusable steel cutlery from Admaya Chaitanya, already tied up and responsible in a big way for a reduction in daily waste generation.

Reddy said, "Plastic ban will be followed by ensuring vendors are aware ahead of what is not permitted. Special mention was made of NWPP bags which are often mistaken for plastic bags. The stall will be arranged to have alternative reusable bags of cloth etc on sale. Mineral bottles are not permitted on the premises but adequate water refill stations will be arranged. All visitors are requested to carry their bottles and reusable bags, to reduce waste generated. All these will be mentioned in brochures and through announcements, press meets, and inaugural event announcements. "

Bus fare hike signals more tariff increases

Deputy CM DK Shivakumar is expected to convene meeting with all city MLAs by January end to discuss water hike issue; other sector hikes being discussed as well

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The decision to increase bus fares could be just the beginning, as other agencies have already submitted proposals to the government for increasing prices.

BJP leader R Ashok protests against bus fare hike on Friday

Water tariff hike likely in Bengaluru

Bengaluru is likely to see a revision in water tariffs this year. Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar is expected to convene a meeting with all city MLAs by the end of January to discuss the issue. The city's water tariff has not been revised for over a decade, leading to financial constraints for the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB), which supplies water to approximately 1.5 crore residents. Monthly expenses have been consistently exceeding revenue collection. A BWSSB official said, "Between November 2014 and March 2024, power costs have increased by 107.3%, maintenance expenses by 122.5%, and salary and pension costs by 61.3%. While BWSSB's monthly expenditure stands at Rs 170 crore, its revenue collection is only Rs 129 crore. This shortfall has made a water tariff hike unavoidable, according to BWSSB."

Support sought from city MLAs

Dr V Ram Prasath Manohar confirmed that letters have been sent to all city MLAs seeking support for the proposed tariff hike. He also stated that a meeting with the Deputy Chief Minister was requested in the second week of this month to deliberate on the issue. A meeting on the tariff revision was initially planned for December under the leadership of Deputy CM DK Shivakumar. However, it was postponed due to the winter legislative session. Sources now indicate that the meeting may take place in the second week or by the end of January. The final decision will be announced after gathering feedback from all city MLAs.

Manohar reiterated the necessity of the revision in his letter dated December 2, urging the Deputy CM to expedite the discussion and decision-making process.

Hike in milk prices?

The Karnataka Co-Operative Milk Producers' Federation Limited (KMF) has already submitted a proposal to the state government to revise the price of Nandini milk by Rs 5 per litre. KMF President L Bhima Naik had earlier said, "KMF has already submitted a proposal to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah regarding the price hike. The decision will be finalised at the government level, keeping the welfare of milk-producing farmers in mind. The Chief Minister is expected to convene a meeting with all district milk union presidents soon to take an appropriate decision." KMF had revised Nandini milk prices six months ago, offering additional milk to consumers to address surplus supply. However, due to increasing challenges faced by farmers, the organisation is now prioritising their welfare with the proposed price hike.

Naik explained, "Even after the hike, Nandini milk prices will remain Rs 14 per litre lower than milk prices in other South Indian states, including Amul. This ensures that the revised price remains competitive while addressing farmer concerns." KMF had also announced that the 50 ml of additional milk per packet, introduced in June, will be discontinued, along with a Rs 2 price reduction per packet. The surplus milk collection in the state had prompted KMF to add 50 ml extra milk to packets while increasing prices by Rs 2. "In June, the price of a litre of milk was increased from Rs 44 to Rs 46, and 500 ml packets were priced at Rs 24 instead of Rs 22 after adding the extra 50 ml.

> **"While BWSSB's monthly expenditure stands at Rs 170 crore, its revenue collection is only Rs 129 crore. This shortfall has made a water tariff hike unavoidable** – Official

Auto drivers push for fare hike amid rising costs

Autorickshaw drivers in Bengaluru are demanding an increase in fares, citing escalating costs of fuel, spare parts, and essential commodities. The current fare structure—Rs 30 for the first two kilometres and Rs 15 for each subsequent kilometre—has remained unchanged since 2021, despite rising operational expenses. Drivers have proposed revising the fares to Rs 40 and Rs 20, respectively, and have submitted appeals to ministers and the State Transport Authority. A committee meeting to discuss the fare hike, initially scheduled for December 23, was postponed, delaying a final decision. With over two lakh autorickshaws serving millions of commuters, the financial strain on drivers is significant, particularly due to the rising price of LPG at Rs 61.56 per kg and increased costs of maintenance. Rudramurthy, General Secretary of the Auto Rickshaw Drivers' Union, highlighted that delays in fare revision are worsening their economic challenges. He pointed out that cities like Shivamogga and Mangaluru revised fares in 2023, while Bengaluru's last substantial hike before 2021 was in 2013. Additionally, unregulated bike taxis have further affected driver earnings, intensifying their call for fair compensation and sustainable urban transport policies.

Metro fare revision?

For revising the fare, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has formed a committee to review and revise the current fare structure, and the committee is expected to submit its report soon, outlining the new fare structure. At present, Namma Metro, which spans 76.95 km, charges a minimum fare of Rs 10 and a maximum of Rs 60, with a 5% discount on e-tickets and smart cards. The revised fares are anticipated to rise by 10-15%. The committee tasked with this revision includes retired Madras High Court judge R Dharani, State Home and Urban Affairs Secretary Satyendra Pal Singh, and retired Additional Chief Secretary EV Ramana Reddy. The committee recently visited Singapore and Hong Kong to study their metro systems, which are privately managed and feature automatic annual fare revisions. While implementing such a system in India poses challenges, metro officials suggest that the fare revision model used by Delhi Metro could be considered for adoption. The final report will be submitted shortly, and a decision will follow.

Power hike?

Last year, Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Limited (BESCOM) submitted a proposal to the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KERC) regarding power tariffs. The proposal suggests a hike of 67 paise per unit for 2025-26, 74 paise per unit for 2026-27, and 91 paise per unit for 2027-28. However, KERC has not yet decided on the proposal.

'30 trek routes cut through tiger conservation plan'

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Wildlife conservationists and activists have alleged that the new Tiger Conservation Plan (TCP) for Kali Tiger Reserve (KTR), prepared by the Karnataka Forest Department and sent to the National Tiger Conservation Authority for approval has nearly 30 new trekking routes proposed inside the reserve.

The draft TCP has been prepared for 2024-2034.

They claim that several of these trek paths are in areas from where forest dwellers were relocated to create inviolate space for wildlife conservation.

"In the new TCP, the KTR administration has proposed more than 20 new trek routes in the Kumbarwada range. Moreover, two trekking paths have been identified in the Sulavali area, from where forest dwellers have been completely relocated. Five trekking paths have also been identified in the forests of Deriya and Karanje villages, from where some families have been shifted," said an activist.

Locals underline that there are many villages that fall under the scope of the Kali Tiger Project and thousands of families of various communities are living in these villages. However, most of these villages do not have access to basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, mobile networks, education, health, employment, etc., due to rules and regulations prescribed under Project Tiger.

The department is carrying out a voluntary relocation programme and shifting villagers out of the reserve area and, trekking routes are being proposed through the same areas.

"Without basic infrastructure, the communities living inside forests for hundreds of years are left with no option but to move out by accepting Rs 15 lakh as compensation. This is publicised by forest officials as an achievement and they take credit for successfully executing the rehabilitation programme. The department then goes ahead and proposes trekking routes through the same villages. This is a breach of trust of locals who were rehabilitated," said a local activist.

They also demand strict action against officials responsible for such proposals in the draft TCP. Locals say they are contemplating filing a complaint with the Human Rights Commission against the KFD official responsible for the proposal of trekking routes.

According to Ravi Redkar, a local wildlife activist, the proposed trek routes will create disturbance in the movement of wildlife.

"Even according to the Project Tiger guidelines, tourism is not allowed in the forest areas where rehabilitations have happened. The entire village of Sulavali in the Kumbarwada range was shifted out of the reserve and as per the draft TCP, the department has proposed a 2-kilometre-long trek route in all seasons. KTR is already plagued with multiple obstructions and tigers cannot move more than two kilometres without encountering one of these. The proposed routes will further intensify that," said Redkar.

When BM approached KFD officials they stated that the document is in the draft stage and is still in the process of approval.

"The trek routes that have been proposed or listed in the draft TCP are largely taken from the previous plans, with traditional trek routes added for completeness of information. No tourism of any kind will be undertaken in villages that have undergone voluntary rehabilitation programs. The proposed trek routes are mostly in buffer areas where eco-development is an important component of management. The draft plan is under scrutiny and if any changes are proposed by NTCA, they will be incorporated," said Nilesh Shinde, Deputy Conservator of Forest, KTR.

 # Clegg out, Kaplan in
Meta taps Republican Joel Kaplan to lead global policy team, replacing Nick Clegg

AI tools like GPT-4 do not fare well in 'conversing' with patients, study finds

NOT A TALKER

With chatbots increasingly being relied upon for making sense of one's symptoms or test results, a study has shown that AI tools may not fare so well in conversations closer to real-world interactions, even as they perform well on medical exam-like tests.

The study, published in the journal Nature Medicine, also proposes recommendations for evaluating large-language models (LLM) -- they power chatbots such as ChatGPT -- before using them in clinical settings. LLMs are trained on massive text datasets and thus, can respond to a user's requests in the natural language.

Researchers at Harvard Medical School and Stanford University, US, designed a framework 'CRAFT-MD' to evaluate four LLMs, including GPT-4 and Mistral, for how well they performed in settings closely mimicking actual interactions with patients.

The framework analysed how well an LLM can collect information about symptoms, medications, and family history and then make a diagnosis. The performance of the AI tools was tested in 2,000 clinical descriptions, featuring conditions common in primary care and across 12 medical specialties.

The LLM was made to pose as a patient, answering questions in a conversational style. Another AI agent graded the accuracy of the final diagnosis as rendered by the AI tool, the researchers described.

"All LLMs showed limitations, especially in their ability to reason and conduct clinical conversations based on information given by patients

Human experts then evaluated the outcomes of each patient interaction for an LLM's ability to gather relevant patient information, diagnostic accuracy when presented with scattered information, and for adherence to prompts.

All LLMs were found to show limitations, especially in their ability to reason and conduct clinical conversations based on information given by patients. This, in turn, compromised the AI tool's ability to take medical histories and render appropriate diagnosis, the researchers said.

"Our experiments revealed critical insights into the limitations of current LLMs in terms of clinical conversational reasoning, history-taking and diagnostic accuracy," the authors wrote.

For example, the AI tools often struggled to ask the right questions to gather pertinent patient history, missed critical information during history taking, and had difficulty synthesising scattered information, the team said.

These AI tools also performed worse when engaged in back-and-forth exchanges -- as most real-world conversations are -- rather than when engaged in summarised conversations, the researchers said.

"Our work reveals a striking paradox - while these AI models excel at medical board exams, they struggle with the basic back-and-forth of a doctor's visit," senior author Pranav Rajpurkar, an assistant professor of biomedical informatics at Harvard Medical School, said.

"The dynamic nature of medical conversations -- the need to ask the right questions at the right time, to piece together scattered information, and to reason through symptoms -- poses unique challenges that go far beyond answering multiple choice questions.

"When we switch from standardised tests to these natural conversations, even the most sophisticated AI models show significant drops in diagnostic accuracy," Rajpurkar said.

An LLM's performance in clinical settings should be evaluated for its ability to ask the right questions and to extract the most essential information, the authors recommended.

They also advised using conversational, open-ended questions that more accurately reflect real-world doctor-patient interactions while designing, training, and testing the AI tools. **PTI**

Apple to pay $95 million to settle lawsuit accusing Siri of eavesdropping

Apple has agreed to pay $95 million to settle a lawsuit accusing the privacy-minded company of deploying its virtual assistant Siri to eavesdrop on people using its iPhone and other trendy devices

Apple has agreed to pay $95 million to settle a lawsuit accusing the privacy-minded company of deploying its virtual assistant Siri to eavesdrop on people using its iPhone and other trendy devices.

The proposed settlement filed Tuesday in an Oakland, California, federal court would resolve a 5-year-old lawsuit revolving around allegations that Apple surreptitiously activated Siri to record conversations through iPhones and other devices equipped with the virtual assistant for more than a decade.

The alleged recordings occurred even when people didn't seek to activate the virtual assistant with the trigger words, "Hey, Siri." Some of the recorded conversations were then shared with advertisers in an attempt to sell their products to consumers more likely to be interested in the goods and services, the lawsuit asserted.

The allegations about a snoopy Siri contradicted Apple's long-running commitment to protect the privacy of its customers — a crusade that CEO Tim Cook has often framed as a fight to preserve "a fundamental human right."

Apple isn't acknowledging any wrongdoing in the settlement, which still must be approved by U.S. District Judge Jeffrey White. Lawyers in the case have proposed scheduling a Feb. 14 court hearing in Oakland to review the terms.

If the settlement is approved, tens of millions of consumers who owned iPhones and other Apple devices from September 17, 2014, through the end of last year could file claims. Each consumer could receive up to $20 per Siri-equipped device covered by the settlement, although the payment could be reduced or increased, depending on the volume of claims.

Only 3% to 5% of eligible consumers are expected to file claims, according to estimates in court documents.

Eligible consumers will be limited to seeking compensation on a maximum of five devices. **AP**

BITS & BYTES

APPLE'S CHINA SLUMP

Shipments to China of foreign-branded smartphones, including Apple Inc's iPhone, fell by 47.4% in November from a year earlier, according to data released on Friday from a government-affiliated research firm, down for the fourth month.

Calculations based on the data from the China Academy of Information and Communications Technology (CAICT) showed foreign brand shipments dipped to 3.04 million units from 5.769 million units a year earlier. The decline follows October's 44.25% year-on-year drop in foreign smartphone shipments. **Reuters**

TESLA DELIVERIES FALL

Tesla reported its first fall in yearly deliveries on Thursday as lucrative year-end incentives for the Elon Musk-led electric vehicle maker's aging lineup and the new Cybertruck pickup failed to lure customers wary of high borrowing costs.

Musk had earlier predicted "slight growth" in 2024 deliveries and offered a range of promotions including interest-free financing and free fast-charging to boost sales.

But reduced European subsidies, a shift in the United States toward lower-priced hybrid vehicles and tougher competition especially from China's BYD hurt Tesla.

The U.S. EV maker's shares closed about 6% lower. **Reuters**

FLIGHT ON TIME

Mexican airline Aeromexico had the world's best record for on-time arrivals in 2024, according to an annual ranking released on Thursday. Delta Air Lines scored the highest among US carriers despite a computer outage that caused thousands of flight cancellations in July.

Aviation-data provider Cirium said in a report that nearly 87 per cent of Aeromexico flights arrived within 15 minutes of their scheduled arrival, a widely used measure of on-time performance among airlines. Saudia, the flagship carrier of Saudi Arabia, ranked second worldwide, with an on-time performance rate of just over 86%, according to Cirium. **AP**

The pits in our playgrounds

KAUSHIK JN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

football, etc. However, it has been two months and the children have stopped coming. Ten RWH pits have been dug and spaced nearly 5 metres apart. The entire area is filled with these pits, making it unusable for children," said a resident of Yelahanka New Town.

A representative of United Way Bengaluru, the non-profit organisation that is digging the percolation pits across the city in association with BBMP told BM, the confusion is due to these areas being designated as 'undeveloped' parks by the Horticulture Department.

"There are quite a few 'undeveloped' parks in the list that are being used by citizens as playgrounds. The Ganesha Park in Yelahanka is

divided into three parts – a children's play area, a basketball court, and a tree park. We created 10 pits across all the three areas. The pits have been elevated nearly four inches from ground level to avoid any accidents while people are using the park and other facilities. If not visible, walkers may trip and fall," said the representative.

Locals say the pits have been dug up every five metres, making the use of playgrounds impractical.

"Percolation pits should have been created only in the Tree Park and park area. The children's playground should have been spared," said another resident. According to officials from BBMP's Horticulture Department, the number of percolation pits (12 feet deep and 5 feet wide) to be created in a given area depends on multiple factors including total runoff generated based on the catchment area.

"As a general rule of thumb, we calculate the total number of pits in a given location based on total run-off and catchment area. It is a standard formula being used for digging percolation pits across the city," said BBMP Deputy Director (Horticulture) Chandrasekhar.

So far, BBMP has dug 634 RWH pits across the city. As per officials from the Horticulture Department, nearly 1,600 more RWH pits will be created in 2025.

NHAI told to restore property in Mangaluru to its owner

The Karnataka High Court has instructed the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to restore a property in Mangaluru to its rightful owner. The property, acquired 15 years ago, must be returned due to NHAI's failure to include the owner's name and land extent details in the acquisition notification.

The court has mandated that any constructions by NHAI on the property must be removed before returning it to the owner, who retains full rights for personal usage. The ruling came from Justice Suraj Govindaraj in response to a 2016 petition by SND Sampath, a Mangaluru resident. The NHAI had issued notifications under Section 3 of the National Highways Act, 1956, to acquire various properties, including the petitioner's property on Nehru Road, Gorigudda, Kankanady 'B' village, Mangalore city.

The preliminary notification under Section 3A excluded the petitioner's name and property number, listing only the survey number. Consequently, the petitioner remained unaware of the proceedings until the NHAI initiated compensation payment. In court, the NHAI argued that mentioning plot numbers, sub-numbers, or owner names was unnecessary, stating that only a brief land description via survey number was required.

The court rejected NHAI's argument, noting that while the final notification mentioned acquiring 1,244 sq. m from survey number 101/1A and listed 25 property owners, it failed to specify individual land portions. NHAI could not clarify the extent of land required from the petitioner's property. The court emphasised that for plotted lands, details including plot numbers, sizes, and owner names must appear in preliminary notifications. It noted that despite these details being available in revenue records, NHAI had failed to publish them.

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tender & notices

PUBLIC NOTICE

IT is informed that 2 bilti books of Anand Roadlines, whose serial number is up to 227751-22780 and 232601-232650, has been lost from Harohalli Industrial Area, Ramanagar, Bangalore. If anyone receives it, please inform Anil Kumar at 8875737257. The informant will be suitably rewarded.

personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, VIDYA BIRADAR SHIDRAMAPPA R/a No 67/1, Shrinidhi, 5th Cross, 2nd main Road, Nanjappa Lay out,Vidyaranyapura Post, Bengaluru 560097. I have changed my name to VIDYA BASAVARAJ. vide Affidavit dated on 02/01/2025 Sworn Before Notary S N Madhu Bengaluru.

I, Eddula Chengal Reddygari Dinesh Reddy S/o Eddula Chengala Reddygari Gangi Reddy, R/o #258 Adarsh Palm Meadows Phase-1 Ramagondanahalli, Varthur Main Road whitefield Bengaluru-560066 have Changed my name to Dinesh Reddy Eddula Chengal Reddy for all Purposes.

I, HEMANGINI JAYDEVSINH MAHARAUL, W/o Ajay Kumar K.B, residing at No.31, 1st Main, behind Rajeshwari Theatre, Konena Agrahara, HAL Post, Vimanapura, Bengaluru-560017 have changed my name to HEMANGINI MAHARAUL, vide affidavit dt: 02.01.2025 sworn before notary A.R Muneer Ahmed, Bangalore

I, Tajunnisa W/o, Imam Sab R/o No 51/1 Hegganahalli Main Road 3rd Cross Peenya 2nd Stage Bengaluru 560091 have changed my name to Tajuna for all purposes.

I Kothandaraman Venkataswamy S/O, Venkataswamy R/o No 1 Srinivasa Nilaya 1st Main 1st Cross Chamundeshwari Layout Doddabommasandra Vidyaranyapura Bangalore have changed my name to Raman Daiwik.

I Aayisha Bi W/O, Akbar Shariff R/o No 436 Manik Mastan Dargah Avenue Road Bangalore 560002 have changed my name to Ayisha Bi.

I, Nisarg Vinodkumar Sarodia S/o Vinodkumar K Sarodia, Residing at:- D-1102, Definer Hilife, TC Palya Main Road, Margondanahalli, KR Puram, Bengaluru-560036. Have changed my name to NISARG SARODIA vide affidavit dated 02.01.2025 Sworn before notary: J Anand Kumar, Bangalore

I Dasanapu Santoshi Kumari W/O, Basavaraju Sarath Babu R/o Flat No 002 Sahithi Daisy Apartment, 1st Main , 7th Cross, Vijaya Bank Narmada Colony Banaswadi 560043 have changed my name to Basavaraju Santoshi Kumari.

I, Roohi Ansari W/o Tanweer Alam R/o Flat No C-1, 2nd flr, Sree Sapthagiri Residency, Doddathoguru, E-City, Bengaluru 560100 have changed my name to Ruhi Alam vide Affidavit Date- 25 -Dec 2024 notary B.M.Chandrashekar

I, BRAHMAKUMARILAXMI, residing at No 77, 3rd Main Road, Vysya Bank Colony, J.P. Nagar 1st Phase, Bangalore -560078, have changed my name to LAXMI, vide affidavit dated 03/01/2025 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Bangalore

I, Ramdas S/o Gurusiddappa R/o Apmc Road Kk Thota Bellary 583102 have changed my name to Ramdas P for all purposes.

I, NUSRA SAMREEN ZABIULLA, D/o Mr Mohammed Zabiulla, Residing at No 806, 1st stage 5th block, HBR Layout, Kalyananagar, Bangalore-560043, have changed my name to NUSRA SAMREEN for all purposes.

I, Ranjith Kumar s/o Janardhan reddy R/O No 1729, 19th main 26th cross 2nd sector hsr layout Bangalore -560102 , Karnataka have changed My name to Ranjith Kumar J for all purposes

I, Yaggati Sailaja W/o Andanappa G Tambralli R/o 142, 4th Cross Gkw Layout Marenahalli Vijayanagar Bangalore 560040 have changed my name to Latha A Tambralli for all purposes.

PRIME PROPERTY

Commercial / Industrial Property REQUIRED

A commercial or industrial property is needed for a new car service centre in (Automobile).

The desired locations include **Lalbagh Road / Wilson Garden / Kormangala 80 ft. Road, Domlur.** The total area required is 25000 sft, with a Shed area of 15000 sft & open land area of 10000 sft.

If only Land is available, required 25000 sft Commercial or Industrial Converted property.

Interested owners, please contact, Arunkumar, on mob no. 99011 53111

Commercial / Industrial Property REQUIRED

A commercial property is needed for a new car showroom in (Automobile).

The desired locations include **CBD Area, Lavelle Road, St Mark's Road, Residency Road, MG Road, Kasturba Road**. The total area required is 4000 sft with car parking.

Interested owners, please contact, Arunkumar, on mob no. 99011 53111

Commercial / Industrial Property REQUIRED

A commercial or industrial property is needed for a new car service centre in (Automobile).

The desired locations include **Peenya, Yeswanthpur, Mahalakshmi, Jalahalli**. The total area required is 30000 sft, with a Shed area of 17000 sft & open land area of 13000 sft.

If only Land is available, required 30000 sft Commercial or Industrial Converted property.

Interested owners, please contact, Arunkumar, on mob no. 99011 53111

Commercial / Industrial Property REQUIRED

A commercial or industrial property is needed for a new car service centre in (Automobile).

The desired locations include **Banaswadi, Kasturi Nagar, Ramamurthy Nagar, Horamvu.** The total area required is 30000 sft, with a Shed area of 17000 sft & open land area of 13000 sft.

If only Land is available, required 30000 sft Commercial or Industrial Converted property.

Interested owners, please contact, Arunkumar, on mob no. 99011 53111

HEALTH TIP: Refined foods are devoid of fiber and nutrients and can lead to insulin resistance, fat gain

Some pre-bottled juices and smoothies can contain over 15 grams of sugar and rapidly leads to blood sugar spikes

BangaloreMirror 13
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Enter the matrix

Why do some people's hair, nails grow quicker than mine?

Throughout recorded history, our hair and nails played an important role in signifying who we are and our social status. You could say, they separate the caveman from businessman.

It was no surprise then that many of us found a new level of appreciation for our hairdressers and nail artists during the Covid lockdowns. Even Taylor Swift reported she cut her own hair during lockdown.

So, what would happen if all this hair and nail grooming got too much for us and we decided to give it all up. Would our hair and nails just keep on growing?

The answer is yes. The hair on our head grows, on average, 1 centimetre per month, while our fingernails grow an average of just over 3 millimetres.

When left unchecked, our hair and nails can grow to impressive lengths. Aliia Nasyrova, known as the Ukrainian Rapunzel, holds the world record for the longest locks on a living woman, which measure an impressive 257.33 cm.

When it comes to record-breaking fingernails, Diana Armstrong from the United States holds that record at 1,306.58 cm.

Most of us, however, get regular haircuts and trim our nails – some with greater frequency than others. So why do some people's hair and nails grow more quickly?

Remind me, what are they made out of?

Hair and nails are made mostly from keratin. Both grow from matrix cells below the skin and grow through different patterns of cell division.

Nails grow steadily from the matrix cells, which sit under the skin at the base of the nail. These cells divide, pushing the older cells forward. As they grow, the new cells slide along the nail bed – the flat area under the fingernail which looks pink because of its rich blood supply.

A hair also starts growing from the matrix cells, eventually forming the visible part of the hair – the shaft. The hair shaft grows from a root that sits under the skin and is wrapped in a sac known as the hair follicle.

This sac has a nerve supply (which is why it hurts to pull out a hair), oil-producing glands that lubricate the hair and a tiny muscle that makes your hair stand up when it's cold.

At the follicle's base is the hair bulb, which contains the all-important hair papilla that supplies blood to the follicle.

Matrix cells near the papilla divide to produce new hair cells, which then harden and form the hair shaft. As the new hair cells are made, the hair is pushed up above the skin and the hair grows.

But the papilla also plays an integral part in regulating hair growth cycles, as it sends signals to the stem cells to move to the base of the follicle and form a hair matrix. Matrix cells then get signals to divide and start a new growth phase.

> **Hair and nails are made mostly from keratin. Both grow from matrix cells below the skin and grow through different patterns of cell division**

Unlike nails, our hair grows in cycles

Scientists have identified four phases of hair growth, the:

- anagen or growth phase, which lasts between two and eight years
- catagen or transition phase, when growth slows down, lasting around two weeks
- telogen or resting phase, when there is no growth at all. This usually lasts two to three months
- exogen or shedding phase, when the hair falls out and is replaced by the new hair growing from the same follicle. This starts the process all over again.

Each follicle goes through this cycle 10–30 times in its lifespan.

If all of our hair follicles grew at the same rate and entered the same phases simultaneously, there would be times when we would all be bald. That doesn't usually happen: at any given time, only one in ten hairs is in the resting phase.

While we lose about 100–150 hairs daily, the average person has 100,000 hairs on their head, so we barely notice this natural shedding.

So what affects the speed of growth?

Genetics is the most significant factor. While hair growth rates vary between individuals, they tend to be consistent among family members.

Nails are also influenced by genetics, as siblings, especially identical twins, tend to have similar nail growth rates.

But there are also other influences.

Age makes a difference to hair and nail growth, even in healthy people. Younger people generally have faster growth rates because of the slowing metabolism and cell division that comes with ageing.

Hormonal changes can have an impact. Pregnancy often accelerates hair and nail growth rates, while menopause and high levels of the stress hormone cortisol can slow growth rates.

Nutrition also changes hair and nail strength and growth rate. While hair and nails are made mostly of keratin, they also contain water, fats and various minerals. As hair and nails keep growing, these minerals need to be replaced.

That's why a balanced diet that includes sufficient nutrients to support your hair and nails is essential for maintaining their health.

Nutrient deficiencies may contribute to hair loss and nail breakage by disrupting their growth cycle or weakening their structure. Iron and zinc deficiencies, for example, have both been linked to hair loss and brittle nails.

This may explain why thick hair and strong, well-groomed nails have long been associated with perception of good health and high status.

However, not all perceptions are true.

No, hair and nails don't grow after death

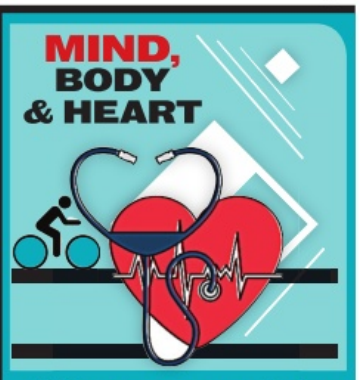
A persistent myth that may relate to the legends of vampires is that hair and nails continue to grow after we die.

In reality, they only appear to do so. As the body dehydrates after death, the skin shrinks, making hair and nails seem longer.

Morticians are well aware of this phenomenon and some inject tissue filler into the deceased's fingertips to minimise this effect.

So, it seems that living or dead, there is no escape from the never-ending task of caring for our hair and nails.

(By Michelle Moscova, UNSW Sydney, The Conversation)



All you need to know about...

Poor sleep

A bad dream
How poor sleep affects mental health could be related to a low function of brain regions that work to keep unwanted, intrusive memories at bay, according to a new study.

Recurrent thoughts
Intrusive thoughts and memories, while occasional and momentary for most, can be recurrent, vivid and upsetting for those suffering from mental disorders, such as depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, Marcus Harrington, a lecturer of psychology at the University of East Anglia, UK, and lead author of the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, explained.

Memory control issues
Researchers compared brain scans of participants who slept and did not sleep the previous night, and found 'memory control' problems in the sleep-deprived -- they faced difficulties in engaging brain regions that suppress the process of retrieving memories.
"Memories of unpleasant experiences can intrude into conscious awareness, often in response to reminders," Harrington said.
"Given that memories play a central role in our affective perception of the external world, memory control failures may go a long way towards explaining the relationship between sleep loss and emotional dysregulation," the lead author said.

REM
REM, or rapid eye movement, sleep -- the stage when one dreams -- was found to help restore function in the brain regions involved in memory control. In a healthy adult, the REM stage accounts for about a quarter of a whole night's sleep.
"Taken together, our findings highlight the critical role of sleep in maintaining control over both our memories and ongoing thoughts," Harrington said. **-PTI**

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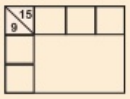
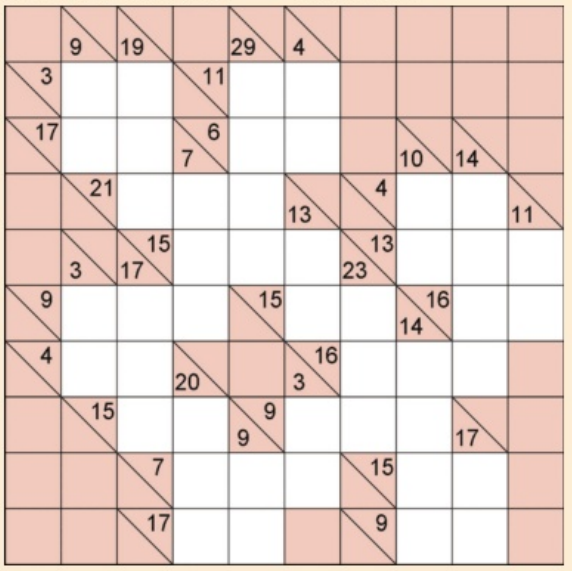
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

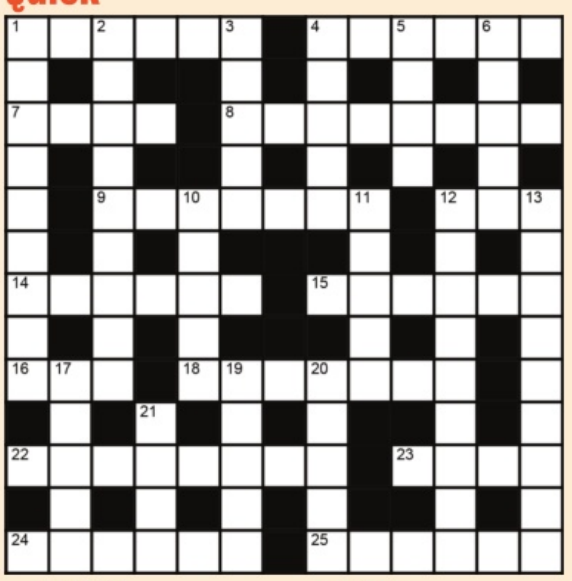


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Unemotional sorts (6)
4 Faced or defied (6)
7 Functions (4)
8 Unspecified place (8)
9 Isotope of hydrogen (7)
12 Reigning king, in short and in Latin? (3)
14 Going wrong (6)
15 Make moist (6)
16 Shoot a marble (3)
18 Stress; suspense (7)
22 Mexican savoury pie (8)
23 Large luxurious car (4)
24 Off course (6)
25 Bargain (6)

DOWN

1 Karnataka lies on India's ___ - ___ coast (5-4)
2 Depose (9)
3 Intelligent (5)
4 Marshy tributary (5)
5 Dull pain (4)
6 Eagle's nest (5)
10 Otherwise ? (2,3)
11 Florida city (5)
12 Being contrite (9)
13 One disliking abroad (9)
17 Prepared for war (5)
19 Make into law (5)
20 Break into pieces (5)
21 Indonesian island (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: W EQUALS C

DJYM OVWWJOO AO CAUQAUK NFVD MAC_JTFDX AU EZJ TFDX EZYE NFV MFGJ.

Linemaro

My mother told me that life is like a deck of cards, so you must be the queen of hearts

Mindchow

What is a friend? A single soul dwelling in two bodies

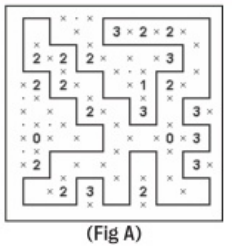
Joke of the day

I am trying to make friends outside of Facebook while applying the same principles. Every day, I go down on the street and tell passers-by what I have eaten, how I feel, what I have done the night before and what I will do tomorrow night. And it works. I already have 3 persons following me: 2 police officers and a psychiatrist.

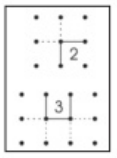
Loop

Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.



(Fig A)

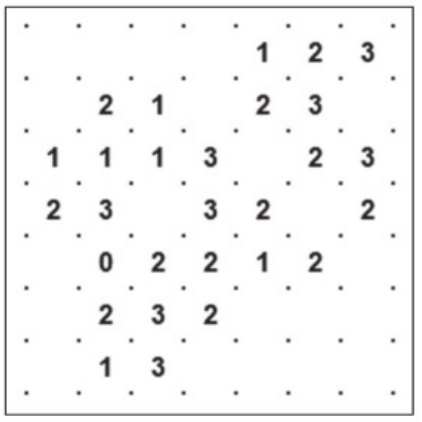


(Fig B) Not Allowed

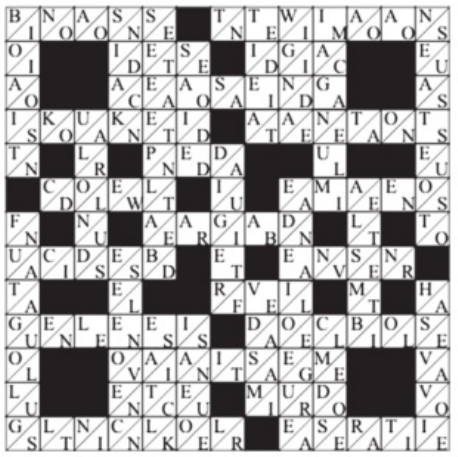
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



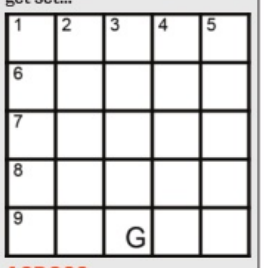
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

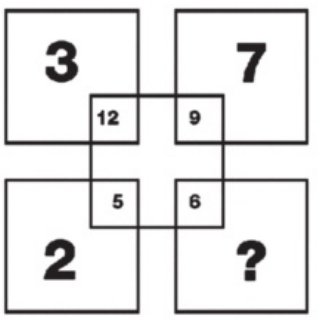
1 DSC is; 6 Pun it; 7 U Rico; 8 Akron; 9 Yes GG

DOWN

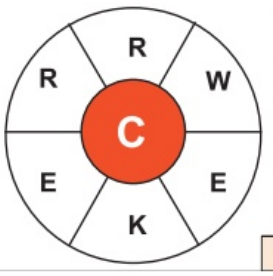
1 Cy Kid; 2 I rune; 3 Progs; 4 IC gun; 5 So sat

Mensapuzzle

Which number completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

02 Average; 03 Good; 04 Outstanding

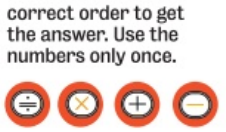
SudokuChallenge

5			4		8			1
7			1	5	3			9
		6		2		8		
1	8						3	5
9	4						1	7
		7		4		1		
8			5	7	2			6
2			3		9			8

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Easy = 1
1 3 6 7

Medium = 18
3 3 5 6

Hard = 21
5 9 9 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

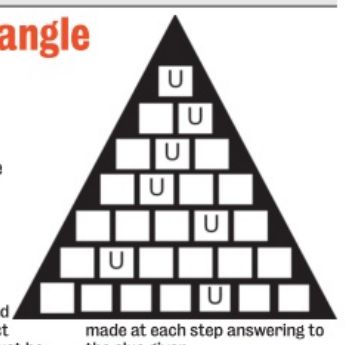
Differences: 1. Bush is taller. 2. Arm is raised. 3. Doorknob is missing. 4. Vacuum hose is different. 5. Window is different. 6. Tie is missing.

Riddler

Dina comes from a large family and has over 20 cousins. How is it possible that all of her cousins have an aunt who is not her aunt?

Alpha triangle

1 Last vowel
2 ___ Et Brute
3 Away
4 Remove forcibly
5 Reconnoitre
6 Habitual practice
7 Ensemble

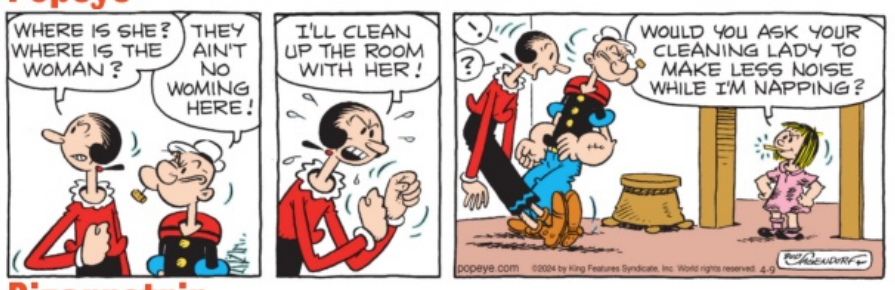


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye


WHERE IS SHE? WHERE IS THE WOMAN?
THEY AIN'T NO WOMING HERE!
I'LL CLEAN UP THE ROOM WITH HER!
WOULD YOU ASK YOUR CLEANING LADY TO MAKE LESS NOISE WHILE I'M NAPPING?
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Bizarrotrip

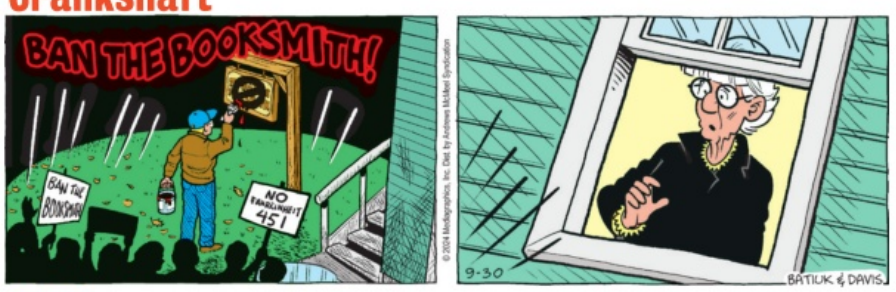
Everything on this is awful, & there's no way to turn it off.
Wayno & Piraro 9-30-24
BIZARRO.COM
Dist by King Features
©2024 Bizarro Studios
PANDORA'S APP

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

SIT DOWN, SIT DOWN, WELCOME TO CHOIR!
HEY, TOBY! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE TAKING CHOIR.
YEAH, I SWITCHED OUT OF COOKING. I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW MUCH CLEANING WE'D HAVE TO DO.
I GET IT. NO NEED TO GET YOUR HANDS DIRTY. OR IN YOUR CASE, CLEAN.
HEART OF THE CITY © 2024 ANDREWS MCMEEL
GOCOMICS.COM/HEARTOFTHECITY
9/30

Crankshaft



Mutts

WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Today, you are blessed by the moon, making it a good day for you. You will have great vitality and may enjoy work as well as romantic moments with your spouse, improving domestic harmony. You might create new plans to start a project, and your perfectionism will help you design the flowchart. Job seekers are likely to find a suitable job. Love birds are advised to avoid discussions on trivial topics

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Today, you may not feel your best as old health issues may resurface, leaving you upset. Impatience and haste may lead to wrong decisions, so take your time before making any choices. Avoid keeping money loosely available, as you might spend it on unnecessary things.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Blessed by the moon, you will feel happy today. Your past investments are likely to yield good gains. Your ability to make quick decisions at work will pay off, bringing you profits shortly.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Today, you may be busy at work. With the help of your strong network, you will be able to implement your plans successfully. Your wisdom will help you gain profits from past investments. Enjoy romantic moments with your spouse, which will further increase domestic harmony. Love birds will have a joyful day.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
The moon blesses you today, bringing happiness. Last week's challenges are over, and with blessings, you will receive recognition for your hard work. With the help of your subordinates, you will be able to start the tasks you had postponed. Your business may see some gains, boosting your finances.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
You may feel dull today due to health issues. It is advisable to postpone making business investments and not start any new ventures, as you may face losses. Your gains may be converted into losses, so proceed with caution.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Today, you will feel enthusiastic, which will speed up your projects. You will make quick decisions that will benefit your business. A new partnership may bring innovation, but it is advised to avoid investments in fixed assets with business partners for now.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Blessed by the positive moon, you will feel healthy today, with old health issues likely to be resolved. Money that was previously stuck may now be recovered. You may also apply for a loan to purchase luxury items.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
The moon blesses you today, giving you confidence. You will make important decisions with ease and grab opportunities without second thoughts. You may plan for higher studies and meet intellectual people, exchanging ideas and expanding your knowledge.

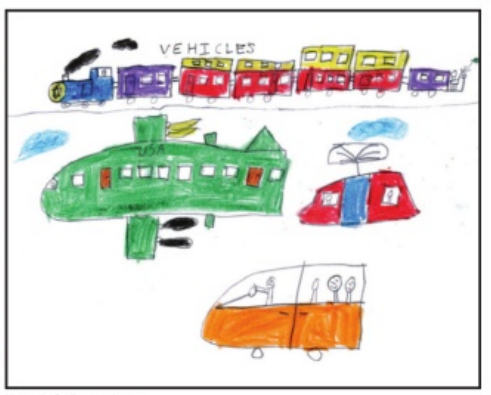
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
You may feel dull today, struggling to complete tasks, which could affect your confidence. Past investments may yield negative returns, and it is advised to avoid arguments over trivial matters, as it will waste your time. Be cautious about spending on unnecessary items.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Today, you will feel energetic and perform efficiently at work. Your hard work will pay off, boosting your confidence. Property disputes with siblings are likely to be resolved. A meeting with an influential person could expand your network, and you may also plan some short trips.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Blessed by the moon, you will feel happy today. You may receive a big order through your communication skills, earning you respect. Politeness with those around you will strengthen your relationships. You may also make important business decisions with the help of your colleagues.

KIDZONE

Anushika Kv,Bengaluru



Yajath S, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
(2¹2 ÷ 2·6 × 2·5)·1/11
(2¹2 + 5-6)·1/11
(2¹7-6)·1/11
2

RIDDLER
The aunt of all of her cousins is Dina's own mother.

QUOTE UNCODE
Real success is finding your lifework in the work that you love.

FAST FIVE

D	I	S	C	S
I	N	P	U	T
C	U	R	I	O
K	R	O	N	A
Y	E	G	G	S

BULL'S EYE
creek, crew, wreck, WRECKER

STRIKE OUT

S	T	I	N	K	E	R		E	E	R	I	E		
				E		C	E		M	E	U	D		V
	U													
	O		V	I	N	T	A	G	E					A
			U	N	L	E	S	S		D	O	C	I	E
	T			L			R	E	L		M			H
	U	N	E	S	S									
	A	I	D	E	D		E		A	V	E	R		
	F		U		E	A	G	A	N		L		T	
	T	C	O	W	L		U		A	M	E	N	S	
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S	O	A	K	E	D		T	E	N	A	N	T		
	O			C	E	A	S	I	N	G			A	
	O			I	T	S		D	I	A			E	
B	O	O	N	S		N	E	W	M	O	O	N		

QUICK

A	D	R	I		F	T		H	A	G	G	L	E	
	E		L		C		S							B
E	M	P	A	N	A	D	A		L	I	M	O		
				B										
T	A	W		T	E	N	S	I	O	N		P		
E	R	R	I	N	G		D	A	M	P	E	N		
	S		O		O		M		E		O			
	W		H		F		I		E		E			
T		R		T	I	T	I	U	M		R	E	X	
	T		R			R		O		E		I		
U	S	E	S		A	N	Y	W	H	E	R	E		
O		V		M		A		C		Y				
S	T	O	I	C	S		B	R	A	V	E	D		

MENSA PUZZLE
9. Taking numbers in diagonally opposite squares, calculate their sum, and put the answer in the small, inner square of the lower number.

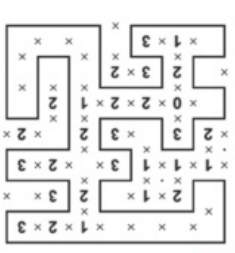
SUDOKU

5	3	9	4	6	8	7	2	1
7	2	8	1	5	3	4	6	9
4	1	6	9	2	7	8	5	3
1	8	2	7	9	4	6	3	5
6	7	5	2	3	1	9	8	4
9	4	3	6	8	5	2	1	7
3	5	7	8	4	6	1	9	2
8	9	1	5	7	2	3	4	6
2	6	4	3	1	9	5	7	8

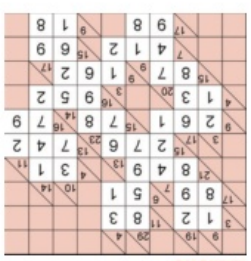
ALPHA TRIANGLE
U, Tu, Out, Oust, Scout, Custom, Costume.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 + 6 − 1 − 7 = 1
Medium
5 × 3 + 6 − 3 = 18
Hard
9 + 8 − 5 + 9 = 21

LOOP



KAKURO



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In Tara's wishlist

Actress Tara Sutaria, who started acting as a child artist, is now a Bollywood actress. She debuted with the film Student of the Year 2 in 2019 along with Ananya Panday and Tiger Shroff. While the actress has been part of films like Tadap and Ek Villian Returns 2, she wishes to be part of a musical film.

The actress wishes to do exciting work this new year. Talking about it, Tara said, "I want to do an out-and-out musical film and this wish is very close to my heart."

Recently she made a stunning showstopper at the Bombay Times Fashion Week. She also shared about her fashion choices. Talking about how fashion and style differ from person to person, the actress said, "I also think that minimalism can never go out of style, and it is something that I follow in my daily attire too. When it comes to walking for fashion shows, I like both minimalism and maximalism because it all depends on the collection and style of the season."

Tara has appeared in films like Marjaavaan and Apurva, among others. As a child actress, she has also appeared in Big Bada Boom, Best Of Luck Nikki, and The Suite Life of Karan & Kabir.

-ETimes

Change of plans

Looks like Ahan-Pooja starrer is not happening

Post his debut with Tadap, Ahan Shetty was supposed to be seen on the big screen next with Pooja Hegde for a film called Sanki.

The film was backed by Sajid Nadiadwala, and directed by Adnan A Shaikh and Yasir Jah. The film was announced last year at an event held by the streamer Amazon Prime Video, and was slated to release on Valentine's Day this year.

But some time in July , reports began to filter that the producer was having second thoughts about the film. As per a report in Bollywood Hungama, Sajid was reconsidering the film due to a weak market and lower-than expected satellite and digital revenues, despite a bulk Amazon Prime deal. The tipping point was Ahan's exorbitant entourage costs (hair, makeup, stylist, etc.), billed to production, leading Sajid to threaten canceling the project, citing poor business viability. Though Suniel Shetty did step in to cover up the costs, it seems all this has now gone to waste.

Sajid Nadiadwala's company Nadiadwala Grandson recently took to social media to share the slate of their upcoming films in 2025 which includes Salman Khan starrer Sikandar, Akshay Kumar led Housefull 5, Tiger Shroff's return with Baaghi 4 and Shahid Kapoor's untitled film. But there was no mention of Sanki which was slated to release on 14th February. Another sign that Sanki is not currently on is that the actress Pooja Hegde, back in October itself went ahead and signed Thalapathy Vijay's final film titled Thalapathy 69. Ahan will be seen in JP Dutta and Anurag Singh's Border 2 with Sunny Deol.

-ETimes

Subject is the star

Actress-singer Jennifer Lopez, who separated from Ben Affleck earlier, keeps reminding Judy Robles, the subject of her new movie, that she deserves all the attention she's been getting.

The pair are currently promoting 'Unstoppable'. The inspirational sports drama has been earning awards buzz, and at screenings, Robles has been greeted with standing ovations, reports 'Variety' .

The audiences are impressed by how successfully this single mom raised her son, Anthony, despite having to endure financial hardships and an abusive relationship.

"I tell her all the time, 'You need to own who you are and what you've done'", JLo said. "You're inspiring every mother who has ever struggled. You really have triumphed. You've raised a son who has become a leader, and you deserve credit.' But she's very humble".

Anthony, as 'Unstoppable' watchers know, became a college wrestling champ, an improbable accomplishment given that he was born with only one leg.

As per 'Variety', Judy was there on the sidelines, unexpectedly learning the same lesson she tried to teach him: you can achieve anything if you work hard enough. After Anthony graduated, Judy went back to school, earning a bachelor's and master's degree, eventually becoming an associate athletic director at ASU.

OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLE

GUNS AND ROSES (KANNADA)
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** HS Srinivas Kumar
- **ACTORS** Arjun, Yashvika Nishkala, Kishore Kumar, Avinash, Sobharaj, Suchendra Prasad, Aruna Balaraj, Ninasam Ashwath, and Jeevan Richie.
- **Duration** 130 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Director HS Srinivas Kumar, who worked as an associate director for more than 25 years under well-known directors, debuts as an independent director in Sandalwood with this movie. Though the director deserves appreciation for facilitating equal screen space for all the actors in the film, he failed to keep the screenplay crisp and interesting. The movie revolves around two underworld dons and police who try to gain an upper hand. The movie also throws some light on the competition between drug mafias and rave parties at resorts on the outskirts of the city.

The movie begins with Rajesh Varma (Suchendra Prasad), an author, narrating the characters of a book - Guns and Roses - to a TV journalist. The book is about Rajendra (Sobharaj), an anti-social element, who joins hands with Nayak, an anti-social from Mumbai. Rajendra, after earning a lot of money, starts ignoring Nayak. Unable to cope with the embarrassment, Nayak starts supplying drugs on his own. Meanwhile, the director introduces a scene narrating how Nayak's brother Satya was saved by Surya (Arjun) from Rajendra's henchmen in the Central Jail. Nayak asks Arjun to work for him. While Nayak is waiting at a tea stall, Ramya (Yashvika Nishkala) happens to see him. Ramya falls in love with Surya. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Surya and Ramya.

As far as the performances of the actors are concerned, Arjun is good in action scenes but has to go a long way to prove his acting skills in emotional and romantic scenes. Yashvika Nishkala has nothing to do in this movie except hugging the hero twice or thrice. Kishore Kumar, as an assistant commissioner of police, has acted well. Sobharaj, as a villain, is convincing. Avinash, Ninasam Ashwath, Suchendra Prasad, Aruna Balaraj, and Jeevan Richie have provided good support.

Veteran stunt master Thriller Manju has not managed to keep the action scenes thrilling.

It is worth a watch if you love action movies based on the underworld.

-Y Maheswara Reddy